

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12

ACDA-19 GAC-01 NIC-01 RSR-01 /112 W
----- 100253

R 201356 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4033
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL MUNICH

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PRAGUE 0579

E. O. 11652: N/ A
TAGS: PINT, CZ
SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

REF: PRAGUE 496

1. CONTRARY TO REPORT (REFTEL) THAT SVOBODA' S HEALTH HAD TAKEN SUCH RECENT TURN FOR WORSE THAT HE COULD NOT BE RE- ELECTED MARCH 22, MOST RECENT INDICATIONS ARE THAT SVOBODA, GOING ON 78 AND AT TIMES OBVIOUSLY FAILING, WILL TAKE NEW FIVE- YEAR TERM. SOVIET EMBASSY OFFICER TOLD US " DEFINITELY" MARCH 19 THAT SVOBODA WOULD CONTINUE IN OFFICE.

2. SVOBODA' S RETENTION OFFERS ADVANTAGE (AT LEAST FOR AS LONG AS HE LASTS) OF POSTPONING SUCH ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS AS (A) MOVE BY HUSAK TO TAKE PRESIDENCY WHILE HOLDING ON TO PARTY CHIEF' S JOB, AS SVOBODA' S PREDECESSOR NOVOTNY DID; (B) TRANSFER OF SOME OTHER LEADING OFFICIAL INTO THIS LARGELY CEREMONIAL POSITION; OR (C) INSTALLATION OF NON- ENTITY , WHICH WOULD INVITE INVIDIOUS COMPARISON WITH THE CZECHOSLOVAKIA OF MASARYK AND BENES.
SVOBODA' S RETENTION ALSO INVITES SUCH COMPARISON,

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GIVEN LOSS OF MUCH OF HIS ELAN VITAL AND PRESTIGE
HE HELD IN 1968; BUT PUBLIC REACTION TO RE-ELECTION
AS OPPOSED TO INSTALLATION OF NEW FIGURE, WILL
PRESUMABLY BE LIMITED TO YAWNS.

SHERER

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
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Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Draft Date: 20 MAR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: cunninfx
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Drafter: n/a
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Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
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30 JUN 2005

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